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A DELAIDE:

A

TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,

AS PERFORMING

WITH UNIVERSAL APPLAUSE,

AT

THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE,

BY

HENRY JAMES PYE,

POET LAUREAT.



CELEBRAE DOMESTICA FACTA.—HOR.

LONDON:

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author having been said both to have adhered too closely and deviated too widely from historic truth in this Tragedy, the following extracts from Lord Littleton's History of Henry II. are given to shew how far either of these opinions may be just.

" From Gervase of Canterbury we learn, that Philip demanded back his sister, who, having been many years accorded to Richard, was not yet married to him, but was kept like a captive, under strict custody, by King Henry in England.

" If Henry (as some modern historians have supposed) was afraid of contracting another alliance with the French royal family, from the experience he had of the bad effects of that which his eldest son had made, he should not have sworn to let this be accomplished, but should have restored the Princess to her brother, whether he did, or did not, admit the pretensions of that King to Gisors. For, he could have no right to detain her in his custody one single day, after he had resolved to break the match, on account of which she had been, so many years before, entrusted to his care. The desire

he

he had shewn of marrying her to John, instead of Richard, had been dropt in the year eleven hundred and eighty-five, and could not now be resumed consistently with the oath taken by him in the year eleven hundred and eighty-six. Nor is it said by any one contemporary writer, that he made mention of it in the conferences now held with the King of France on this subject. It was, therefore, extremely difficult to justify or excuse his not doing one of these two things, either marrying Adelais, without delay, to Richard, or sending her back to her brother. When wise men act unwisely, the cause must be usually sought for in their passions. I therefore cannot doubt, that the real motive of his otherwise unaccountable conduct was a passionate love for this Princess. It has been mentioned before what reason there is to believe, that he had sought a divorce from Eleanor his wife, by the authority of Pope Alexander the Third, which would, if obtained, have enabled him to wed Adelais himself: but, even when this had been refused, he might flatter himself, that some of Alexander's successors would be more complaisant; or that Eleanor, who was old, might die before him, and leave him free to make this lady his queen. Love too easily hopes what it ardently wishes; and the supposing him under the tyranny of that passion, which is commonly attended with a greater degree of dotage in elderly men than in young, unravels the whole mystery of his present and subsequent proceedings. For it was natural, if he loved Adelais, that he should rather incline to risk a war (however dangerous it might be) than to think of parting with her, and delivering her to her brother, who might presently marry her to another Prince.²¹¹ or both and LYTTLETON, p. 345.

To this passage there is a note in the Appendix, vindicating Henry from the charge of having seduced Adelais.

"A contemporary writer says, that Philip in this conference, reconciled Richard with Henry; but could not reconcile John, who was then making war, in another part of France against his father. And almost all the historians of that age agree, that, after the taking of Mans, John did join in the league which Henry's enemies had concluded. This desertion must have been the sudden effect of some offers, made to him by his brother, in which he thought he should better find his account than in any benefits which his father, who was not likely to live long, could effectually bestow. And I think it more probable, that intelligence sent to Henry of his having taken arms against him in Normandy informed that King of his treason, than that he learnt it, (as Hoveden says he did), by Philip's communicating to him a list of an association against him, at the head of which was Prince John. In whatever manner he knew it, the knowledge proved fatal. The agitation of his mind had lately been too great for a body grown infirm. He was now in the fifty-seventh year of his age. Those passions which have naturally the most hurtful effects on the human constitution, anger and grief, tore his heart. In his quarrel with Richard he had not been wholly blameless; and a sense of this made the evils it had brought upon him more painful. But the enormous ingratitude, and horrible perfidy of his most beloved son, whose exaltation he was eagerly, and dangerously for himself, endeavouring to procure, gave him a much

A

deeper

deeper wound, the anguish of which, concurring with the shame of receiving terms of peace, imposed by his enemies, and mortifying to him, though not very grievous, threw him into a fever. The day after the last conference he was carried on a litter to the castle of Chinon, and there took to his bed. His son, the Chancellor, had obtained his leave to be absent, when the treaty was signed, that he might not be a witness to his humiliation ; but, being informed of his illness, he hastened to Chinon, and finding him so opprest with the violence of the fever, that he could not sit up in his bed, he raised his head by supporting it upon his own bosom. Henry fetched a deep sigh, and turning his languid eyes upon him said, “ My “ dearest son, as you have, in all changes of fortune, “ behaved yourself most dutifully and affectionately to “ me, doing all that the best of sons could do, so will I, “ if the mercy of God shall permit me to recover from “ this sickness, make such returns to you, as the best of “ fathers can make, and place you among the greatest “ and most powerful subjects in all my dominions. But “ if death shall prevent me fulfilling this intention, may “ God, to whom the recompence of all goodness be- “ longs, reward you for me.” “ I have no wish (re- “ plied his son) but that you may recover and may be “ happy :” after which words he rose up, and, unable to restrain his gushing tears, left the room. Yet, hearing soon that no hopes of life remained, he returned to perform the last duties to his father, who, roused from a kind of trance by the lamentations he uttered, opened his eyes, which had been for some time closed, and, knowing his son, made an effort, with a faint and almost extinguished voice, to express a desire, that he should obtain the bishoprick of Winchester, or
rather

rather the archbishoprick of York. Then taking from his finger a ring of great value, which he before had intended to present to his son-in-law, the King of Castile, he gave it to this Lord with his last blessing, and commanded that another, which was kept in his treasury as his most precious jewel, should be also delivered to him. After this he sunk down, and in a short time expired."

LYTTELTON, B. v. p. 262, 263.

The Chancellor mentioned here was Geoffrey, son to the King by Rosamond, and brother to Longsword, Earl of Salisbury. As a fighting prelate would not be in character in these days, the author has represented him under his mother's name, Clifford, as a young warrior, who devotes himself to the church in consequence of grief for the death of his father.

Henry was so sensible of his filial piety, that on a former occasion he said *that his other sons, by their conduct, had proved themselves bastards, but this alone had shewn himself to be really his true and legitimate son.*

BOOK IV. p. 195.

TO A TRAGEDY

PROLOGUE.

ADDRESS TO THE TRAGIC MUSE,

WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM SOTHEBY, Esq.

And Spoken by Mr. C. KEMBLE.

O H Thou ! around whose throne, in awful state,
By Fear and Pity rang'd, the passions wait :
At whose commanding call, from every age,
Hosts swept by death from Nature's changeful stage ;
Chiefs, and stern patriots, and the scepter'd train,
Rise from the tomb, and glow with life again !
Before thy lifted eye, th' Historic Muse
Presents the pageant of her passing views ;
And, on the column of recording time,
Points sculptur'd groups of Virtue, Woe, and Crime.
Tamer of Man ! beneath thy boundless reign
Wild Fancy shapes her visionary train,
Embodies airy beings all her own,
And rules, with wizard wand, the world unknown ;
Leagues the weird Sisters where the night-storm raves,
Drags howling spectres from reluctant graves ;
Bids fear, with icy dew-drops, freeze the frame,
When horror broods o'er "deeds without a name ;"
From realms of tortur'd spirits lifts the veil,
And half reveals th' unutterable tale.

Yet, sov'reign of the soul ! thy sway refin'd,
Charms while it awes, afflicts, yet soothes the mind :
Guardian of moral sense, and feeling shame,
Firm guide of Virtue, mask'd in Pleasure's name :
Lo ! on Guilt's glowing cheek, strange drops appear,
Where burns, like molten lead, the new-born tear :

Lull'd

PROLOGUE.

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Lull'd by thy voice, the painful struggles cease,
 Mild Melancholy breathes returning peace ;
 Repentance forms a wish to be forgiv'n,
 And Angels waft a pray'r half-breath'd to Heav'n.

Oh ! while thy forceful strokes at will controul,
 Or tender touches humanize the soul !
 Send Terror forth, the vengeful goddes guide,
 Tame the mad insolence of earthly pride ;
 Each dire vicissitude of life reveal,
 Till trembling tyrants fear what wretches feel ;
 Send Pity forth, and while her suasive pow'r
 Allures to woe the sadly-pleasing hour ;
 To cold Prosperity's strange gaze expose
 The painful image of unnotic'd woes ;
 Nurse the soft sense that man to man endears,
 And soothes the sufferer in the vale of tears.

Fix'd on this base, our Poet rests his claim,
 And woes, in your applause, the voice of fame ;
 On English annals builds historic rhymes,
 And calls the spirit forth of feudal times ;
 Such, as of old, to Syria's shouting coast
 Led lion-hearted Richard's Christian host ;
 When England's King the red-cross flag unfurl'd,
 And darken'd in its shade the Pagan world.
 Such, as of late, in Heav'n's appointed hour,
 Gaul's vaunted Idol drove from Acre's tow'ry ;
 When Cross and Crescent in just league combin'd,
 Smote, in his pride, the murderer of mankind :
 While Albion's naval Hero foremost trod,
 Scatter'd the Host that scorn'd the living God ;
 And Asia, rescu'd from th' Oppressor's might,
 Hail'd Allah's name, and crown'd the "Christian Knight."

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY J. TAYLOR, Esq.

And Spoken by MISS MELLON.

WHAT an odd creature was this Gallic maid,
To seek a cloister's melancholy shade,
Whilst a young ardent lover, high in arms,
Submissive bow'd before her conqu'ring charms !
Grant thee the father would supplant the son,
The double vict'ry by her graces won,
Should but have fir'd the nymph to take the field,
In the proud hope a thousand more might yield :
Beauty should gain new laurels every day,
And nobly aim at universal sway.
Besides, to give some glory to the thing,
Her venerable victim was a King ;
And then how vast the triumph, to ensnare
The fam'd gallant of Rosamond the fair !
Unhappy Rosamond, whose piteous fate,
Love, with a sigh, for ever shall relate !
But to our play—The heroine's case was hard,
So oft to wedlock near, so oft debarr'd ;
And then that meddling priest to interfere
When youthful passions urged their fond career,
Bid the poor swain to Palestine depart,
That he might lose his head as well as heart.
Why, if the man had known his place aright,
He would not sep'rate lovers, but unite ;
His duty was to join love's gentle elves,
And as to parting—leave it to themselves :

Or

Or if there needs another's help, at least,
'Tis bus'ness for the lawyer, not the priest.
Nay, had this legate paus'd a week, or so,
The spouse might then have been content to go,
And rather rush amid the martial strife,
Than wage close warfare with a wrangling wife.
Well! women must be strangely chang'd, I vow,
No girls from lovers fly to convents now;
None here will hide in dismal dens from man,
But range the world, and conquer all they can.
Now to our bard—The man pretends to say,
There's more of truth than fiction in his play;
If so, from him avert all hostile aim,
And e'en let gossip History bear the blame.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

<i>King Henry</i>	MR. AICKIN.
<i>Prince Richard</i>	MR. KEMBLE.
<i>Prince John</i>	MR. BARRYMORE.
<i>Clifford, a son of King Henry by Rosamond</i>	MR. C. KEMBLE.
<i>Legate</i>	MR. CORY.
<i>Officer</i>	MR. MADDOCKS.
<i>Adelaide, sister to Philip King of France</i>	MRS. SIDDONS.
<i>Emma</i>	MISS HEARD.
<i>Abbess</i>	MRS. COATES.
<i>Soldiers and Attendants.</i>	

SCENE, *Chinon in France.*

ADELAIDE:

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

An Apartment in the Palace.

PRINCE JOHN and CLIFFORD.

CLIFFORD.

WHENCE springs this new delay?—For six
long years
Has Adelaide been Richard's destin'd bride,
Hostage of Peace between the rival nations.
Yet some vain subterfuge, some weak excuse,
Ever defers the nuptials.

PRINCE JOHN.

Richard's temper
Accords but ill with this protracting policy:
I dread the event.

CLIFFORD.

The sad reverse of fortune
That mark'd his last revolt, when, join'd in arms
With faithless Philip, his victorious sword
Scatter'd our force, might teach our aged monarch
Not wantonly to rouse again his fury.
Now too, when circled by unnumber'd foes
Far from the coasts of England—Our thin squa-
drons
To Richard all attach'd, and only waiting
His signal to revolt.

B

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE JOHN.

Well you know
 The jealous spirit of my father's counsels,
 Ever suspicious of his sons. I fear
 Some busy tongue has whisper'd to his mind,
 Too apt to listen to such idle rumours,
 Doubts of my brother's faith.

CLIFFORD.

May ruin seize
 Such turbid spirits, who with doubts distract
 The peace of human kind!—Disunion now
 Is fraught with sure destruction—All our provinces
 In France will snatch the first pretence to shake
 Our tottering power.

PRINCE JOHN.

My father builds his hopes
 On other grounds—The church's interference.
 Philip and Richard, fir'd by youthful ardor,
 Have vow'd to lead their powers on Asia's plains
 Against the impious Saracen;—and now
 A holy Legate, from the Court of Rome,
 Is every hour expected to demand
 Their instant aid. Victorious Saladin
 O'erpowers the Christian force—wins back their
 conquests—
 And threatens to display his silver crescent
 O'er Salem's hallow'd altars.

CLIFFORD.

Henry never
 Can be so rash, so lost to every sense
 Of honor or of prudence, now to suffer
 His interference to prevail?

PRINCE JOHN.

Not suffer
 The full accomplishment of schemes he planned?
 Frustate his own designs? I'm much deceiv'd,
 Or

A TRAGEDY.

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Or he has us'd his influence to engage
The Legate to persist in his demand.

CLIFFORD.

If this be true, ah ! what can be the event
But shame and ruin ? Tho' the youthful princes
Are prompt enough with ardent zeal to follow
This meteor of renown, which oft has led
Europe's bold sons to distant war, they never
At such a moment, when the mingled claims
Of glory and of love demand their stay,
Will blindly follow Rome's imperious mandate.
Some deep mysterious cause must surely urge him
To such a rash attempt.

PRINCE JOHN.

That cause to me
Is not so deep a mystery.—The passions
Of Henry are no secret—ever ready
To catch at beauty's flame. Not jealousy
Of Philip's arts, or Richard's rash ambition,
Is the true cause of these suspended nuptials ;
There is another jealousy—fair Adelaide !

CLIFFORD.

Base and injurious slander !—not within
Loose probability's extremest verge !
If Henry's firmer years have felt the power
Of beauty's charms too strongly, is it likely,
Worn as he is by time, and sad misfortune's
Still ruder shocks, which with apparent effort
Have min'd the powers of life, he now should throw
One thought that way ? No ! Other cares than
love,
Ill-suited to his years, now rack his bosom.

PRINCE JOHN.

That I can hardly credit—I, who know
How oft his breast has burn'd with lawless passion,
The lingering embers of habitual vice

B 2

Will

ADELAIDE:

Will faintly glow amid the frost of age.
 How oft his consort, royal Eleanor,
 Has wept his wandering fancy; while her sons,
 The generous offspring of a legal bed,
 Have seen their father's favor basely layish'd
 Upon a spurious brood!

CLIFFORD.

This, sir, to me,
 Is barely short of insult! Happy were it
 For Henry's peace, if all his legal sons
 Had learn'd the pious claims of filial duty
 From those whom you have censur'd.

PRINCE JOHN.

You are warm!

CLIFFORD.

Yes, I avow the charge!—I boast, with pride,
 A lineage sprung from one of gentle manners,
 As well as graceful form and noble birth.
 Nor can I envy, while my fond remembrance
 Recalls my mother, hapless Rosamond,
 The turbulent successors of a queen
 Fierce and ungovernable, whose stern passions
 Sow'd thorns of sorrow in her husband's bed,
 And train'd her sons to treason and rebellion!—
 Your insults I despise—yet my breast glows
 With indignation, to behold a son,
 At such a time, when danger lowers around us,
 Try to excite confusion by a tale,
 The most improbable that hell-born malice
 Could e'er suggest!—I go to cross your schemes,
 To counteract such arts—as far at least
 As my weak power avails. I go to keep
 The few, but valiant, troops that I command,
 Free from your wiles, and firm in their allegiance!

[Exit.]

PRINCE

A TRAGEDY.

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PRINCE JOHN, *alone.*

Go and exult in your illustrious birth,
And honest folly—These uncertain hints,
Or I am much deceiv'd, will find from Richard
A better welcome. His unguarded passions
Will catch at once the probable suspicion,
And kindle into rage. My mother's arts
Have set aside the infant Arthur's claim,
And well I hop'd this frantic hero Richard
Would leave his bones in Palestine ; while I
Stood fair for England's throne. This purpos'd
marriage
May bar my expectations—'Tis not Rome
Will check his course, while love for Adelaide
Inflames his bosom—I must move his fancy
To doubt her faith—My father !

Enter KING HENRY.

KING HENRY.

I am much
Perplex'd—your doubts alarm me—yet I dread
Impetuous Richard's violence, should this marriage
Be once again postpon'd. Added to this—
Is not my faith to royal Philip pledg'd ?
By solemn treaty pledg'd ?

PRINCE JOHN.

That solemn treaty
Deprives you of your crown—For know, the mo-
ment
The altar seals the nuptial vows of Adelaide,
False Philip join'd with my unnatural brother
In impious league, will seize upon your person,
And place the crown of England on the brow
Of Richard.

KING HENRY.

Monstrous perfidy ! If this
Be true—

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE JOHN.

Has ever yet my faith to you
Been tainted by the breath of foul suspicion ?

KING HENRY.

Never, my dutious son—yet these dire tidings,
So fatal to my peace, this cruel treachery,
Have pierc'd my soul with anguish.—But, does
Philip

So poorly deem of England's potent monarch ?
Is Henry's name in arms so little known,
That he can for a moment think I'll yield,
Nor strike a blow for freedom and for empire ?
Rouse all my gallant warriors ! We will meet
His coward perfidy with manly vengeance.

PRINCE JOHN.

Where are those gallant warriors ! Distant far
From England's happy shores and faithful swains,
True to their Prince of Egbert's royal line—
Guarded by doubtful Normans—All your hope
Is to delay these nuptials.

KING HENRY.

How delay them ?—

PRINCE JOHN.

The Legate.

KING HENRY.

What of him ?

PRINCE JOHN.

He is, I know,
Employ'd by Rome to hasten the departure
Of Philip and my brother for the plains
Of holy Palestine. And yet, perhaps,
Even Rome's commands may not be proof against
The arts of their ambition. He may barter
The church's interest for the gold of France—
Then counteract their schemes—in private second,
By

A TRAGEDY.

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By splendid gifts and ample promises,
The Legate's perseverance.

KING HENRY.

With reluctance

I yield to such a measure—dire necessity
Alone compels me.—O my son, beware
How you permit your bosom e'er to harbor
The demons of ambition.—Did you know
The scorpion thoughts that sting a monarch's heart,
When base ingratitude, with envious eye
Surveys his purest actions, and imputes
His best designs to tyranny and pride,
You would avoid the splendid load of empire
As the worst burthen Heaven can lay on man.

[Exit.

PRINCE JOHN.

Such is the language of a sickly mind
Sated with power. My free, undaunted spirit
Looks up with eager transport to this burthen,
This splendid weight of royalty ; nor fears
To meet the glorious toil that empire brings.
My brother here ?—'tis well—now art assist me.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O give my passions way—my tortur'd bosom
Is torn, is agitated, ev'n to madness !

PRINCE JOHN.

What has enrag'd you thus ?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Have you not heard ?—
Henry has found another mean pretence
To cross my promis'd nuptials, tho' confirm'd,
By solemn oath, between the rival monarchs.

PRINCE JOHN.

Say on what ground ?

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE RICHARD.

The cause assigned is this.
 He waits the arrival of the Roman legate,
 To ratify his right to those dominions
 Which Philip gives in dower with Adelaide—
 Injurious claim!—Must Rome's encroaching priest
 Thus with our treaties interfere? Shall we—
 Shall Europe's independent monarchs suffer
 Such gross indignity?

PRINCE JOHN.

But you are bound
 By holy ties—you have assum'd the cross;
 Till you are freed from those by Rome's decree,
 You cannot wed.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Let the proud Roman pontiff
 Beware how he offends me—I am still,
 A few short months first to my love devoted,
 Ready to lead our gallant English troops
 To check the furious Saracen. If thus
 He dare insult the champion of the cross,
 Will Richard draw a sword in such a cause?
 Confusion!—Do my sufferings move your mirth?

PRINCE JOHN.

Indeed they do not. Yet I smile to see
 You turn your anger on the Roman pontiff,
 When nearer much, perhaps, the real cause
 Of this delay may lie.

PRINCE RICHARD.

I'm lost in wonder—
 Ten thousand wild conjectures cloud at once
 My troubled senses. Tell me—instant tell me,
 Where your suspicions point.

PRINCE JOHN.

Enquire no more—
 Perhaps 'tis mere conjecture, and my thoughts
 Would but distract you.

A TRAGEDY.

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PRINCE RICHARD.

Brother, is this well?—
Is this a friendly part? Your cooler temper
Feels not the whirlwind of tempestuous passion
That tears my struggling bosom.

PRINCE JOHN.

My surmises,
Devoid perhaps of truth, might raise that passion
To giddy violence—let me be silent—
I have said too much already.

PRINCE RICHARD.

If you know
Aught that concerns my peace, at once unfold it.
To play thus with my passions, nor becomes
A brother nor a friend. Those names are cancell'd
If longer you refuse to clear the mystery
That hangs on all your words.

PRINCE JOHN.

When thus adjur'd,
Tho' heaven knows how unwillingly, I give
The secret councils of my bosom. Know
Your Adelaide has charms in other eyes.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Amazement! It can never be.—Who dares
Even cast a look toward her—form even a thought
That tends that way?

PRINCE JOHN.

O there are daring spirits,
Who, feeling love's strong influence, will attempt
Whate'er that love suggests.

PRINCE RICHARD.

But let that hero,
That daring spirit, guard his bosom well
Against my just resentment. By the powers,
The awful powers of vengeance, safer might he

C

Snatch

ADELAIDE:

Snatch from the famish'd pard his prey, than cross
My love for Adelaide !

PRINCE JOHN.

And yet—

PRINCE RICHARD.

Yet what ?

PRINCE JOHN.

Perhaps I am deceived ; perhaps my fancy
Too freely construes what my eye observes.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Your eye observes ?—Curse on your hesitation,
Speak out at once, and give me instant ease ;
Even torture is a bliss to what I feel !

PRINCE JOHN.

Collect yourself—be calm—and I will speak.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Well, I am calm ; proceed.

PRINCE JOHN.

Then—I suspect
Your father is your rival.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Ha ! my father !

PRINCE JOHN.

Does that excite your wonder ? Is his heart
Dead to the power of beauty ? He has eyes—
And Adelaide has charms.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Henry my rival ?—
It cannot be. Slave as he is to passion,
It's wildest stretch of fury ne'er could drive him
To such a monstrous thought—to sink within him
All sense of shame—I never can believe it.

PRINCE JOHN.

You must be right—I'm glad you take it thus—
'Twas only my suspicion, first excited

By

A TRAGEDY.

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By too officious friendship. Henry's care
For your eternal welfare, solely moves him
To wait the purpose of the Roman See.
We know his pious zeal, his warm attachment
To Rome's dominion.

PRINCE RICHARD.

I am undeceiv'd—
Your words have flash'd conviction on my soul.—
And is it thus? Is this the kind return
Of love parental for my faithful service?
Was it for this, in many a bloody field
My daring arm pierc'd thro' Ierne's squadrons,
And crown'd his brows with conquest? While
these limbs
Brav'd in his cause the adverse elements—
A father reckless of his son, and breaking
Vows form'd in the face of Heav'n, violating
The sacred laws of hospitality,
My dearest rights invaded.
It is too much, my agonizing soul
Bursts at the thought.

PRINCE JOHN.

Yet, hear me for a moment.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O! you have rais'd a tempest in my soul,
And every calmer thought is driv'n before it—
Yes, I will have revenge—my sword shall right
me—
The duty of a son, a subject's faith,
By this foul deed are void. Had I no friend,
No brother, no companion sworn in arms,
Who would with generous force oppose such ty-
ranny,
And shield my plighted bride?—O torture! tor-
ture!

ADELAIDE:

Perhaps the fickle fair one yielded up
Her easy faith at once—Perfidious Adelaide !

PRINCE JOHN.

Restrain yourself—give not the rein to fury—
Suspend your violence 'till clearer proof.
Confirm this tale of guilt.

PRINCE RICHARD.

What clearer proof
Can there be of her falsehood ? Had she not
Listen'd with pleasure to my father's vows,
I should have shar'd her grief—The horrid tale
Conceal'd from me, proclaims her infamy.

PRINCE JOHN.

Perhaps her timid caution threw a veil
Over his base designs, lest indignation
Should drive you to some fatal act.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Such caution
Was treason to my love. But here I vow
To leave her and these guilty walls for ever—
The vile abode of outrage. Triumph, Philip !
I come once more to combat on your side.
Yet, ere I go, perfidious, cruel maid,
I will again behold you, will upbraid you
With this unheard-of baseness.

PRINCE JOHN.

If you prize
Your just revenge, your honor, shun, O shun
The dangerous interview—Her syren tears
Will shake your firmness.

PRINCE RICHARD.

What are tears to me !
When I have proof of her inconstancy
Engraven on my heart, in characters
No circumstance can alter. Were she fairer

Than

Than love itself could fancy—Ah ! what fancy
 Can image beauties fairer than her own—
 She should not dupe the injur'd soul of Richard—
 No—I will scorn her wiles, and proudly tell her
 I laugh at ties her perjur'd heart has broken.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

Scene, another Apartment in the Palace.

Enter ADELAIDE and EMMA.

EMMA.

MADAM, forgive the fond solicitude
 That on your pensive solitude presumes
 Thus rashly to intrude. Those plaintive sighs,
 That look of sorrow, when your dearest wishes
 Seem plac'd within your reach, awake my wonder.

ADELAIDE.

Alas ! my Emma, tho' the similes of peace
 Have smooth'd the rugged front of war, and
 Richard,
 My bosom's lord, will soon receive my hand,
 Given with a father's and a brother's sanction,
 I feel a load of sorrow on my soul ;
 And my prophetic fears, in spite of reason,
 Subdue my wearied spirits.

EMMA.

Thus it happens,
 That wayward fancy will imagine ills
 To wound the breast of peace ; and when the sub-
 stance
 Of real evil is o'ercome, the mind
 Conjures up shadows of ideal woe.

Why

ADELAIDE!

Why turn unthankful from the present good,
To fix your eye on visionary forms
Of fancied grief.

ADELAIDE.

Alas ! the trembling heart
That long has felt the oppressive hand of sorrow,
Distrusts each transitory gleam of joy,
And doubts the smiles of fortune. O my Emma,
Unnumber'd dreadful images of horror
Distra&t my thoughts. Henry's ambitious mind,
My brother's restless spirit, and the fire
That animates my Richard's ardent temper,
Speak to my shuddering breast a thousand dangers,
Awake a thousand fears.

EMMA.

Brave tho' he is,
And truly noble, yet I own the warmth
Of Richard's passions flames with such impatience,
As mocks the guard of reason.

ADELAIDE.

O ! his foul,
However fierce, when roused by sense of iniu't,
To me is gentler than the mildest breeze
That fans the bloom of Spring. He is all kindness.
To thee, my Richard, is my bosom drawn
By a resisile's force. Thy fame, thy virtues,
Even thy defects, are dearer in my eyes
Than all the world united.

EMMA.

Yet his passions
Are quick and eager ; and when once excited,
As uncontroulable as winds and waves,
When roars the wintry tempest—Even his love
Is mingled with a fervor that alarms me,
When I reflect how much your gentle bosom
May suffer from it's violence.

ADELAIDE.

A TRAGEDY.

23

ADELAIDE.

Sometimes

I own the same reflections wake my fears—
Yet, when I see his nobleness of soul,
A heart incapable even of a thought
That borders on dishonor, and whose feelings
The eye at once can read, his faults are lost
In the bright radiance of surrounding virtues.
Then he redeems his errors with such kindness,
Such warm excess of tenderness and love—
I see you smile, my Emma, at my weakness.

EMMA.

Madam—the Prince—

ADELAIDE.

Leave me, my gentle friend. [Exit EMMA.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Am I permitted ere I go for ever,
And take a hated object from your sight,
To speak a few short words ?

ADELAIDE.

What mean those accents,
Faltering and wild, those looks of indignation ?
What has disturb'd you thus ?—

PRINCE RICHARD.

Perhaps you thought,
Because my bosom is not prone to doubt,
And where I gave my heart, I also gave
My warmest confidence, it was impossible,
(Almost indeed it was) that glaring falsehood
Could alter my opinion ; and you wonder
To find your arts could ever be unravell'd,
Or I could see when you desired to blind me.

ADELAIDE.

Is this reproach to me ?—Have I deserv'd

This

ADELAIDE:

This mean suspicion?—On what bold pretence
Do you arraign my faith?—Some envious tongue
Has blasted my fair fame!—But let the traitor—

PRINCE RICHARD.

Madam, beware—For know, the indignation
That on the brow of slander'd innocence
Shews lovely, and is thron'd in dignity,
Speaks in the frown of guilt a harden'd mind,
That braves the sense of shame.

ADELAIDE.

Sir, could I bear
This taunt of infamy with brow unruffled,
I should by acquiescence give a colour
To this unmanly stroke of coward malice.
But, by the voice of conscious truth acquitted,
I scorn its efforts, and I court the conflict.
To the severest test, let malice bring
My every action—Point one guilty stain
To blot my spotless fame, my blameless faith
To vows, once breath'd to you, ere frantic passion
Thus taught distemper'd jealousy to start
At self-created phantoms.

PRINCE RICHARD.

This is all
Your sex's art, screening your own inconstancy
Beneath a lover's weakness, and excusing
Your own mean falsehood by the storm of jealousy
Excited by that falsehood. Think again—
Search well your inmost soul, and answer truly,
If I am not betray'd.

ADELAIDE.

No—on my honor—
Not even in thought by me.

PRINCE RICHARD.

False maid, beware—
Honor's a sacred name, by which adjur'd

Even

A TRAGEDY.

25

Even open guilt, that is not sunk by meanness,
Debas'd, as well as profligate—will pause.—

ADELAIDE.

This is too much ! Have I deserv'd this usage ?
Knighthood should blush, basely to injure one
Without a friend to right her ; left an hostage
Here among strangers—yet I have a brother—
Ah no ! rash Philip is a rude associate
Of your designs. I am alone—deserted—
The mock of fortune.

PRINCE RICHARD.

You the mock of fortune ?
Is England's monarch then, is potent Henry
Become so low as not to have the power
To vindicate his mistress ? Does that wound you ?
I see the conscious guilt glow in your face—
Your blushes speak your falsehood.

ADELAIDE.

Yes—the blood,
Rous'd by the sense of virtuous indignation,
Mounts to my cheek, to hear the base asperion
By cruel malice fram'd. My Lord ! My Lord !
There needed not this subtle veil of slander
To hide your wavering heart. O you were free
To follow your own will—you might have left me,
Have gone where proud ambition's gilded trophies,
Or newer charms, had lur'd you, and not form'd
This wretched scheme, improbable as false,
To stain my virgin fame. I was deceiv'd—
I thought that bosom, tho' the slave of passion,
Was more the slave of virtue, and could never
Harbour a thought that honor disavow'd.
How has my heart been frozen oft by terror,
When I have pictur'd to myself the dangers
That might await your rashness, and have seen you
In fancy's eye, borne from the fatal combat

D

A bleeding

A bleeding corse. What are my sufferings now ?
 To view the idol of my adoration,
 The image of all glory, all perfection,
 Form'd by my partial love, defac'd, and mangled
 By this injurious stroke of mean suspicion—
 O ! 'tis too much—it rives my tortur'd soul.

[Supports herself against the Scene.]

PRINCE RICHARD.

What have I done ? My rash impetuous frenzy
 O'erpowers her gentle frame—I cannot leave her
 In this distress—humanity forbids it.
 Look up, my Adelaide !

ADELAIDE.

That well known voice
 Recalls my wandering senses—But, alas !
 Where are the gentle kindness, and affection,
 That once attun'd each accent of that tongue ?
 You now are anxious to suppose me guilty,
 And listen to the most unlikely tale
 That monstrous calumny could e'er invent,
 With credulous prejudice.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Howe'er my soul
 Started with horror at the direful thought
 Of your inconstancy, you cannot doubt
 My earnest wish to find you innocent.

ADELAIDE.

What can my innocence avail, if thus
 Each groundless doubt enflames your jealousy ;
 And every tale, that busy scandal frames,
 Condemns me in your eye, while accusation
 Alone is proof of crimes that trembling nature
 Sickens to think of.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O ! my Adelaide,

Wound

Wound not my bosom farther—deign to clear
 This mystery of fate!—My ear shall drink
 Each word with dumb attention; and my love
 Shall turn the scale of justice on your side
 With partial fondness.

ADELAIDE.

Such partial fondness
 I once had claim'd, and gloried in it's cause.—
 I now should only ask for rigid justice,
 Could I descend so low as to defend
 My slander'd innocence—But know, my heart
 Disdains the thought!—If you suppose me guilty,
 Is it not worth my slightest care to shew
 The injurious falsehood?—I forswear your pre-
 sence!—

Enjoy your frantic visions!—yet, when time
 Shall vindicate my pure, my spotless fame,
 My faith to you unshaken, then, perhaps,
 You may, too late, repent the hasty passion
 That wrong'd me by suspicion!

PRINCE RICHARD.

O! you wound
 My heart with piercing anguish!—Will you leave
 me?
 Leave me for ever? Not one parting look
 To cheer my dark despair?—Am I your scorn?

ADELAIDE.

No! though we part for ever—false and faithless
 As your misguiding frenzy deems me, yet
 I'll not conceal my thoughts. Heaven is my wit-
 ness,
 My vows to you have ever been inviolate
 As vestal purity;—and rash, and cruel,
 As you have been, the weakness of my bosom
 (O! that I now must call by such a name
 A passion that was once it's fondest pride)

ADELAIDE:

Is still to you devoted ; nor can ever
Another image fill the aching void.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O, agony of grief ! what angel softness
My cruel doubts have injur'd.—Adelaide !
You cannot leave me thus.

ADELAIDE.

What ! can you ask me
Again to come a voluntary victim
To your unjust suspicions ? Not alone
The feelings of my heart—my fame, my honor
Demand the sacrifice ! But time, nor change,
Shall ever win me to another's arms.—
Let that suffice—'tis all that I can promise.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Behold me at your feet !—My faltering voice
Can scarcely breathe the prayer my soul suggests—
The imperfect accents die upon my tongue.
Turn not away your eyes ; nor, cruel, hide
The sweet effusion of repentant mercy
That swells their moisten'd lids. For pity's sake
Tear not my bosom thus ! Let not a few,
A few unguarded words by madness utter'd;
Plunge me in endless misery.—If ever
You really lov'd !

ADELAIDE.

Alas ! that I have lov'd.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Have lov'd ! distracting retrospect of bliss
Which my misguided violence has blasted.—
And is it past ? Am I belov'd no more ?
Can you pronounce that cruel doom ?

ADELAIDE.

I cannot—
Yes—Spite of all the injuries I suffer,
The fatal weakness lingers in my breast.

PRINCE

A TRAGEDY.

29

PRINCE RICHARD.

O call not mercy by so harsh a name!—
And will you quit me then?

ADELAIDE.

Ought I to stay?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Compel me not thus to condemn myself.

ADELAIDE.

Say what wild start of frenzy could induce you
To charge me with a crime of such a dye?—
To think that I could listen to the vows
Of one, if he were base enough to breathe them,
Whom solemn ties of sanctimonious awe
Precluded from the thought—of Richard's father.

PRINCE RICHARD.

A love like mine—flaming almost to madness,
So often cross'd by danger and delay,
Shrunk at the shade of fear.—My father too—
The fury of his passions, his rash power
Eager to violence.—

ADELAIDE.

What was his power,
His passion, Sir, to me?—If he could harbour
So dire a thought—Say what had I to fear?
Was I expos'd to danger?—England's monarch
Is not an Asian despot, nor the sister
Of royal Philip, tho' the pledge of peace
Between two hostile realms, an eastern slave.—
Whose dark suspicion could suggest the thought?

PRINCE RICHARD.

My brother.—

ADELAIDE.

O beware his artful wiles.—
I would not harshly speak of one who shares

Your

ADELAIDE.

Your confidence, or entertain suspicion
 But on the strongest grounds—Yet I must own
 There is a lowering gloom hangs o'er his brow,
 A sullenness of aspect, that repels
 All generous intercourse.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Yet recollect
 That Henry still has sought each vain pretence
 How to elude these nuptials—that he only
 Has yielded to the dread of Philip's power;
 That even now he is employing arts
 To bring the Roman Legate to defer
 Our long expected union.—Weighing this,
 And knowing how much interest and ambition
 Should prompt him even to urge our speedy nuptials,
 Were he not sway'd by some more powerful motive;
 My long experience of his headstrong passions
 Which age has yet not weaken'd—never check'd
 By aught in it's pursuit—all these combin'd
 Confirm my brother's doubts.

ADELAIDE.

Awful heaven !
 If this be so—if those by thee entrusted
 To guard the rights of others, are the first
 To violate the nearest ties of nature—
 Ah ! where shall persecuted innocence
 Be shielded from oppression ?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Can you pardon
 The frantic ravings of outrageous passion,
 That with blaspheming voice presum'd to fully
 Your spotless innocence?

ADELAIDE.

Of that no more—
 For we have other cares—Alas ! my Richard,
 Your tidings have alarm'd me.—If your father
 Can

Can entertain the purpose you have hinted,
Which yet I hardly think, one only way
Can shield me from his power—the cloister's shelter.

PRINCE RICHARD.

And are the hopes you gave me sunk already?—
Have I but dream'd of bliss? Condemn'd to wake
To cruel certainty of lasting woe?—

ADELAIDE.

I do not mean seclusion from the world
By vows irrevocable—Ah, I feel
My soften'd heart too much to you devoted
For heaven to claim it solely—I will take
Protection of the altar for a time,
Till kinder stars, and happier hours await us.—
Oppose me not in this—

PRINCE RICHARD.

Your saintlike virtue
Is form'd to soften my too stubborn temper—
You must—you shall be mine—the guardian powers
Who watch propitious o'er my country's welfare
Will sanctify the union, and my people;
When England's throne is to my care entrusted,
Shall bless the milder charities that soothe
My fiery spirit, and with grateful prayers
Pursue the gentler virtues of their Queen.

ADELAIDE.

Farewell, my Richard—and remember, Adelaide,
True to your love, and constant to her vows,
Will neither act, or suffer aught unworthy
Of Philip's sister, and your destin'd bride.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Farewell my soul's best treasure, and may angels,
Bright as your form, and spotless as your virtue,
Watch o'er your steps. [Exit ADELAIDE.

Enter

ADELAIDE:

Enter PRINCE JOHN.

PRINCE JOHN.

The prelate sent from Rome
Is just arriv'd.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Well, then—We now shall see
If Rome will obstinately still insist
On my rash vow, or be content awhile
To wait, 'till first my nuptials are fulfill'd.

PRINCE JOHN.

The court of Rome will hardly be persuaded
Even to postpone this promis'd expedition.
When all the Christian world, elate in arms,
Are eager to protect the holy towers
From Syria's conquering host.

PRINCE RICHARD.

She must postpone it,
Or else the war will want the aid of England.

PRINCE JOHN.

How will that sound in the astonish'd ear
Of all assembled Europe, when around
Her, panting warriors croud, and martial rage
Beams from each eye, and glows in every breast ;
While every tongue shall ask, but ask in vain
For English Richard ?—He, whose radiant arms
Still glitter'd in the dreadful front of battle,
And, like a flaming meteor, led his squadrons
To victory and fame ?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Spare that reproach—
I am not now to learn a soldier's duty,
Or catch the flame of martial emulation
From bosoms cold as thine. My ardor yet
Has ne'er been faint, when glory bade it blaze.
The unwarlike mind, to ease and sloth a slave,

My

May in the filken lap of luxury
Slumber away it's honor—but the heart
Fir'd by the generous flame of virtuous love
Acquires new courage from the godlike passion,
And beauty leads to glory, and to conquest.
Yes, Adelaide ! from thee my kindling soul
Shall catch congenial virtue. Loving thee,
I love the abstract of all truth and goodness ;
And to deserve thee, I must learn to merit
True fame's unblemish'd wreath.—Not the extreme
Even of punctilious honor, e'er can censure
The few short hours I snatch from war and tumult,
To seal my nuptial vows. Then, from thy arms,
The purest temple of connubial faith,
Forth to the field of danger will I rush,
A truer champion in the cause of heaven,
And proud by deeds of manly hardihood,
To prove myself thy knight.

PRINCE JOHN.

I did not mean
To hint suspicion of your well-tried courage,
But still the bravest are not safe from slander,
Whose poisonous breath will blast the fairest fame,
Even on the slightest ground.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Then let the coward
Who wears the semblance of a worth he has not,
Shrink at her touch.—For he whose fame is built
On vain opinion only, and but reads
His claim to honor in the million's praise,
Falls with the baseless pedestal that rais'd him—
But he whose pride is founded on the basis
Of conscious worth and self-approving virtue,
Despises all the empty sneers of scorn,
If by the voice of inborn worth acquitted.

ADELAIDE :

Come then, my brother, let us seek this prelate,
 And try if Rome has insolence to place
 Her haughty foot on his aspiring head,
 Who vows to lead her holy force to conquest.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Scene an Abbey.

Enter ADELAIDE and EMMA.

ADELAIDE.

YE cloister'd walls, whose solemn gloom excludes
 The busy tumults of a restless world,
 Well could I bury in your deep retreat
 The cares and duties of a court for ever,
 And give my days to solitude and peace.

EMMA.

The gloom that hangs around this solemn mansion
 Obscures your better reason.—Surely, madam,
 You cannot entertain so sad a purpose,
 You, who enjoy each gift of rank and fortune,
 With beauty to enflame a rival world,
 And a heart open to the warmest feelings
 Of soft humanity; not form'd to follow
 The selfish call of lonely meditation,
 But active in the nobler exercise
 Of mild benevolence, and social virtue.

ADELAIDE.

Ah! what can this avail, even if the picture
 Which thy too partial fancy draws were true?
 Do passions lead to happiness? The bosom,
 To each sensation tremblingly alive,

Feels

A TRAGEDY.

35

Feels but the force of aggravated woe.
Why was I born to greatness?—O! my friend,
The lowliest village maid, whom humbler fortune
Has kindly placed within the happy circle
Of joy domestic, feels a thousand comforts
That I must never know—she has a mother
To soothe her in distress; a father's counsel
To guide her steps; a brother's arm to right her.—
Have I a brother? No!—for I was torn
From every dear connection, and surrender'd
A trembling hostage to a foreign court.

EMMA.

Yet there were hours when royal Adelaide,
Tho' bred in England's hostile court, bewail'd not
An absent father, and a distant country.

ADELAIDE.

Ah! why recall those days of fleeting joy,
That never must return? 'Tis true, my Emma,
There have been hours when your unhappy friend
Thought herself truly blest—when royal Hénry,
By every gentle blandishment, assuag'd
My rising grief, and, with paternal fondness,
Left me no cause to weep a father's absence;
Nor could I in my Richard's father see
Aught but a parent fonder than my own.
But, ah! those scenes are past; and their remem-
brance

Adds only sorrow to my present fate.—
That once rever'd, once honour'd parent, now
Becomes the fatal object of my fears;
While dark suspicion sheds a gloom of doubt
O'er all his actions, and each mark of fondness
Seems fraught with shame and ruin.

EMMA.

Madam! see,
The King approaches. [Gentlemen, Soldiers.

E 2

Enter

ADELAIDE:

Enter KING HENRY.

ADELAIDE.

Royal sir, this honor
I did not here expect—I thought these cloisters
Secure from interruption.

KING HENRY.

Why does Adelaide
Court solitude and silence? Why prefer
The lonely horrors of this sacred mansion
To scenes of brighter aspect?

ADELAIDE.

Ah! the scenes
Of gay festivity are little form'd
To dress in smiles the pensive brow, or soothe
A bosom loaded with oppressive sorrow.

KING HENRY.

What sorrow wrings your breast?

ADELAIDE.

Sir! can you ask?
Am I not here detained a splendid captive—
Kept from a brother's arms?

KING HENRY.

A tie, I hope,
Dearer than that of brother, soon will bind you
To think yourself our daughter, and our court
The centre of your joy.

ADELAIDE.

It will not stain
The modest cheek of virgin purity
To own my bosom entertains that wish:
But I confess the various strange pretences,
By which you still elude the solemn treaty
With Philip ratified, and yet refuse
To yield me to my brother, move my wonder;—
And till that mystery is clear'd, I trust

You

A TRAGEDY.

37

You will not deem me wayward, or capricious,
If I seclude my person from your court,
And shun your presence.

[*Exeunt ADELAIDE and EMMA.*

KING HENRY, alone.

What can this portend?—
Her words betray mistrust and discontent!
She plainly thinks I form some deep design
Against her peace and honor.—Each precaution
I take against her brother's hot ambition,
And Richard's treachery, seems in her eye
An outrage to her safety.—Ha! my son!

Enter PRINCE JOHN.

PRINCE JOHN.

I but precede the Legate.—He has enter'd
The abbey gates—he comes to seek you here—
My brother too.

KING HENRY.

What! Richard with the Legate?

PRINCE JOHN.

Yes—He has urged him strongly to impart
The purport of his mission. This refused,
His anxious expectation leads him hither
To hear what is resolv'd.

KING HENRY.

His heady violence
Distracts my inmost soul.—O! that his breast
Possess'd that steady calm, that filial reverence,
That marks your words and actions.

PRINCE JOHN.

Royal sir,
It is my pride, my happiness, to shew
My duty to your orders—Would to heaven
My life could buy your peace!—Alas! I fear
My brother. Yet—

KING

ADEDAIDE:

KING HENRY.

Why that mysterious pause?

PRINCE JOHN.

How can I speak? I do not wish to raise
Suspicion in your mind—and yet your safety—

KING HENRY.

I charge you by the duty of a son,
Which you have ever kept inviolate,
Disclose your thoughts.

PRINCE JOHN.

Your wishes, sir, to me
Are absolute commands—all other cares
Yield to the stronger claims of filial duty.—
Know, then, impetuous Richard is determin'd,
Should Rome refuse to free him from his vow,
To quit these walls, and, join'd in arms with Philip,
Again renew the war.

KING HENRY.

Accur'st effect! Of lawless lust of power!—Alas! my life
Has been a scene of trouble—persecuted
By jealousy of an imperious wife,
And her rebellious sons;—yet thou art true,
Thy faithful breast alone receiv'd no spark
Of thy stern mother's violence.

PRINCE JOHN.

My lord,
Behold, the Legate comes.Enter the LEGATE attended, PRINCE RICHARD, and
CLIFFORD.

KING HENRY.

Holy father,
With reverence that becomes the delegate
Of Rome's imperial pontiff, I receive
Your sacred mission, and with due obedience

Await

A TRAGEDY.

39

Await his awful mandate.—Does he suffer
These long protracted nuptials to proceed ?

LEGATE.

Your son to other duties is devoted—
The cause of heaven demands him. He is bound
By ties superior to all worldly claims—
The church expects him now to head her legions.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Behold me ready to obey her summons !—
I only ask a transitory respite,
To solemnize my plighted faith to Adelaide.

LEGATE.

Altho' the church approves connubial rites—
Nay, sanctifies their forms, they must not clash
With her immediate interests.

PRINCE RICHARD.

I am not
The slave of sensual appetite—these nuptials
Are on no private interest urged.—I own
The powerful charms of Adelaide—her beauty—
And yet superior virtues fire my soul.
I own myself her slave—yet fond affection
Is not the only or the strongest motive.—
Two rival nations look with anxious eyes
To see a union which, in common welfare,
Shall blend their jarring interests.

LEGATE.

What's the welfare,
The temporal interests of united Europe
To injur'd heaven ?—Behold the sacred fields
By deluges of martyrs' blood ennobled,
Now desolate and waste, o'er-run by infidels,
Who spoil the temples and pollute the altars
Rear'd to a present Deity !—Behold
The outstretch'd arm of vengeance now prepar'd

To

To strike the blow vindictive !—Shall thy hand
 Arrest the awful bolt ?—My son, my son,
 Let not delusive dreams of patriot zeal
 Deceive your fancy ; nor beneath the shew
 Of public virtue hide the selfish passions
 Enflam'd by female art !

PRINCE RICHARD.

Insulting priest,
 I tell thee the pure flame that fires my breast,
 By virtue fann'd, is what thy grosser sense
 Feels not even in idea ! [To KING HENRY] Sir,
 can you
 Permit this sanction'd hypocrite to slander
 The virtues of a Princeſ you are bound
 By duty and by honor to protect ?

KING HENRY.

You go too far by such injurious words
 To stain the reverend delegate of heaven.
 Such insults unaton'd may draw upon us,
 And on our guiltless subjects, the displeasure
 Of Rome's thrice holy see.

PRINCE RICHARD.

'Twere well for Europe
 Had ſhe never ſuffer'd Rome's presumptuous priests
 To interfere, or guide her various interests,
 While on our easy faith ſhe builds her greatness,
 And rears her empire on the neck of kings.—
 But, ſir, I wish the holy pontiff joy
 Of his new convert.—For the time has been
 You were not quite ſo zealous in his ſervice ;
 And when you found the growing power of Rome
 Cross'd your designs, you mark'd your indignation
 Even by her servant's blood—and Becket's mur-
 derer
 Stands in the sacred legends of the church
 A witness of your violence.—But when

The

A TRAGEDY.

41

The reverend squadrons combat on your side,
Tho' in a cause—

LEGATE.

Rash youth, forbear—nor thus
Arraign the pious councils of the church,
On love and mercy founded, nor presume
To execrate a crime that she has pardon'd.—
Tho' dreadful was the deed, the guiltless blood
Of martyr'd Becket has been expiated
By solemn rites of penitence and prayer.

PRINCE RICHARD.

By gold and by corruption, rather say ;
For which you not alone sanction the crimes
Of sacrilege and murder ; but your voice,
With prostituted breath, abets the cause
Of future violence, and sanctifies
Incest and perfidy !

LEGATE.

I'll hear no more
Of this rude profanation !—But, young man,
Mark what I say, and tremble.—In the name
Of Rome's high sovereign pontiff, whose decesses
The Christian world obeys—I will pronounce
Your nuptials void, if you presume to celebrate
The interdicted rite, before your vow
To heaven is satisfied.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Thou dar'st not do it !

LEGATE.

Not dare ! Proud Prince, that will be instant seen.
Within these walls I reign supreme. If once
I give the order, here shall Adelaide
Remain the altar's votary—from thy sight
And hopes, cut off for ever.

F

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE RICHARD.

Presumptuous slave ! First this avenging arm
Shall free mankind from your insulting tyranny.

[Draws his sword, but is disarmed.

KING HENRY.

Disarm his headstrong rage !

CLIFFORD.

My lord, consider
The consequence of this your rash attempt—
Forbear—what honor can your vengeance gain
Against a priest unarm'd ?

LEGATE.

O let his rage
Spend all it's idle force.—By sanctity
Fenc'd and protected, I defy his threats.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Thank not your vaunted sanctity, but those
Whose friendly force my lifted arm prevented,
And gave me time to think.—But 'tis enough—
I ne'er was recreant in the lists of glory,
Nor have I when my honor stood engaged,
Much more my solemn faith, shrunk from the
conflict;

But ere my sword shall thus be proudly forc'd
To wage a war from which my injur'd heart
Now turns with indignation, I will throw it
For ever from my grasp. [To the KING] Sir, you
may glory

In this your proud ally—The time may come
When you shall feel his insolence, and mourn
The rash resolve that tempted you to raise
The usurpation of a foreign power
To lord it o'er your own, your people's rights.—
For me, I bend not to his iron yoke,
But fly indignant your dishonor'd court.—

And

And, haughty prelate, know the hour approaches,
When thou, and thy proud master, shall repent
The exercise of this officious zeal. [Exit.

KING HENRY.

He's strangely agitated.—Much I fear
Some dread event from his ungovern'd rage.
Follow, my son, and try to calm his passions.

[PRINCE JOHN goes out after his brother, and the rest on the opposite side of the stage.

Scene the outside of the Abbey.

Re-enter PRINCE RICHARD and PRINCE JOHN.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Why do you follow me?

PRINCE JOHN.

I come to soothe
Your ardent grief, to mitigate your woes,
By friendship's lenient balm.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Not all the powers
Of friendship, or of love, can soothe a mind
Tortur'd like mine—stung by repeated insult.
My only hope is vengeance! That alone,
Tempts me to bear this hated load of life.—
Ungrateful Henry!—When I led your armies,
I led them on to certain victory—
They have beheld me in the hostile front
Of adverse squadrons—they have felt my arm,
And shrank beneath the stroke.—Once more I'll
bear.

My courage, and my fortunes to your foe—
Again my arms shall shine with dreadful radiance
In the bright van of Gallia's rival host.—
Philip will not refuse to own my wrongs,
But crown my service with its dearest hope,
And give his lovely sister to my wishes.

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE JOHN.

What will avail you aught the gift of Philip,
While Adelaide remains in Henry's power?

PRINCE RICHARD.

True, but her heart is mine—nor dare he force
Her present sanctuary—now too guarded
With greater reverence by the Legate's presence.

PRINCE JOHN.

The Legate may be bias'd.—We have seen
How interest and ambition sway his influence.
He may be brought to sanction violence
As well as perfidy—and for the heart
Of Adelaide—

PRINCE RICHARD.

'Twere sacrilege to doubt it—
She is all truth, all constancy, all virtue.

PRINCE JOHN.

It may be so, perhaps—But thro' the medium
Of fond affection's partial eye, her merits
May shine with heighten'd lustre.—My opinion
Of female virtue is not quite so sanguine—
Nor do I know the constancy so rooted,
As not to yield before the immediate prospect
Of wealth and power.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O banish from your heart
The demon of suspicion, whose foul breath
Poisons each generous thought; your vain surmises
Had nearly blasted all my hopes, and led me
To doubt the kindest, and the purest love
That ever warm'd the breast of truth and beauty.
He who believes no virtue can resist
Self-interest and ambition, shews himself
A slave to both.

PRINCE

A TRAGEDY.

45

PRINCE JOHN.

That undeserv'd reproach
Wounds not my conscious truth—Be this the test.
If you are really lov'd—if her whole heart
Is to your wish devoted—if the passion
That Henry entertains is hateful to her,
And that the dazzling charms of proffer'd greatness
Sway not her resolutions, she must know
The abbey's walls yield but a weak defence.
Paint all her dangers to her, and persuade her
To join your flight, and seek her brother's court,
As the sole means of safety and protection.
If she refuse this proof—if here she stay,
Trusting to Henry's power, whatever reasons
Her sophistry may urge, his suit is not
So dreadful to her feelings as she feigns.

PRINCE RICHARD.

I see the horrors of her situation,
And doubt not her compliance.—Ah! too well
I know the fervor of my father's passions,
When rous'd by love or interest. Adelaide,
You shall partake my fortunes—I will place
Your present danger in so strong a light,
That you must be persuaded, must forsake
These fatal cloisters for your brother's court,
And the protection of a lover's arms.
Say, will you share my hazards?

PRINCE JOHN.

In your enterprise
With ardor I embark—Yet let me pause—
Perhaps 'twere prudent not to join you now.
Here I may do you better service—Clifford,
That bastard scyon from my father's stock,
Is to his cause strongly attach'd—His courage
And courteous manners make him popular,
And the few English troops he here commands

Are

Are all at his devotion. I will try
 To lure them from their chief, and win them over
 To your designs. When this I have effected,
 I will avow myself, and boldly stand
 The warm avenger of my brother's wrongs.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

Scene a Court before the Palace.

PRINCE JOHN alone.

PRINCE JOHN.

THUS far my schemes have prosper'd: Adelaide
 I know will never be induc'd to join
 The hasty flight of Richard—that refusal
 Renews his jealousy, and turns his love
 To deadly hatred.—Soft—is that so certain?
 The earnest suit of Richard, and those doubts
 Of Henry's purpose which my art suggested,
 May work upon her fears. She must be stopp'd.
 And see where Clifford comes—his honest zeal
 Shall be the engine of my purpose.

Enter CLIFFORD.

Clifford!

In happy hour you come; your friendly counsel
 And generous aid are wanted.—O I grieve
 To see the promis'd harvest of our hopes
 Blasted so soon.—The demon of dissention
 Now stalks again at large.

CLIFFORD.

The legate's pride,
 And Henry's blind compliance with his wishes,
 Have rais'd a tempest that will pour its fury
 On our distracted country.

A TRAGEDY.

47

PRINCE JOHN.

Yes, my friend,
I am bewilder'd in the maze of dangers
That lie on every side : but most I fear
My brother's violence—I know he meditates
A new revolt.

CLIFFORD.

Cannot your words prevent him ?
You have his confidence.

PRINCE JOHN.

You might as well
Counsel the waves to silence when the tempest
Sweeps o'er the boiling ocean, as persuade
His bosom to be calm when the fierce gust
Of sudden passion heaves it.—Much I fear
He will not quit alone his father's court.
He means to bear the lovely Adelaide
To Philip's camp, companion of his flight.
But this must be prevented.—She an hostage,
We may make terms with her impetuous brother,
Who else, by Richard aided, threatens ruin
To our o'er-number'd force.—Be it your care
To watch the abbey walls that she escapes not.

[Exit.]

CLIFFORD.

Yes, artful Prince—and I will watch thee too ;
For much I doubt that thy insidious wiles
Have caus'd this fatal change. The breast of
Richard,
You say, is torn by passion !—but whose breath,
By false insinuation, rais'd the tempest,
And blew it into madness ? O'er our heads
Destruction hangs ; and those whose timely care
Might stay the impending storm, sway'd by in-
terest
Or blind revenge, precipitate its fall.

One

ADELAIDE:

One only chance remains.—I'll try at least
 To undeceive the King, whose easy breast
 Perfidious John has poison'd.—If his fix'd,
 His partial fondness for him, makes him scorn
 My honest counsel, I discharge my duty
 To my misguided Prince and injur'd country.

[Exit.]

Scene the Abbey.

ADELAIDE alone.

Each ray of hope is lost—I find the Legate
 Refuses to release my gallant Richard
 From his rash vow.—Our nuptials are postpon'd—
 Perhaps for ever!—The events of battle
 Who can foresee!—Besides, imperious Henry
 May force me from the cloisters.—No—there is
 One path that leads to safety—if I see
 Aught that appears like violence, the altar
 Shall be my refuge—I'll devote myself
 By vows irrevocable, and assume
 The holy veil.—O heavens, the prince!

Enter PRINCE RICHARD.

PRINCE RICHARD.

My life, my lovely Adelaide!
 We are undone, inevitably ruin'd.—
 My father has prevailed—Corrupted Rome
 Abets his schemes—it is resolv'd to part us.

ADELAIDE.

Alas! I am not to learn the fatal tidings,
 I am inform'd of all.

PRINCE RICHARD.

And must we part?

ADELAIDE.

The thought is death—yet what alternative?

PRINCE RICHARD.

To fly.

ADELAIDE.

A TRAGEDY.

49

ADELAIDE.

Impossible !

PRINCE RICHARD.

What ! shall I sit
The pointed mark for injury and insult
To shoot their arrows at ?—tamely behold
The best, the dearest rights of human nature,
By sacrilegious insolence invaded,
And, with the patient meekness of a hermit,
Bow to the stroke, and kiss the hand that wrongs
me ?

Not such my temper.—No—I have resolv'd
Instant to fly from these ungrateful walls,
And join your brother's arms—he will receive
The injur'd friend that Henry has abandon'd,
Espouse my cruel wrongs, and give me vengeance ;
And from his hand I shall receive those charms
My father's shameless perfidy denies me.—
Why droops my love ?

ADELAIDE.

Your rash resolve alarms me—
Have you consider'd well, maturely weighed
Each consequence of this wild enterprise ?

PRINCE RICHARD.

I have.—The Norman troops are all to me
Firmly devoted ; and the English warriors,
In numbers weak, and more than half, my friends.
Fear not, my love, this arm even from the shadow
Of danger shall protect you.

ADELAIDE.

Ah, my Richard !
Your sanguine hopes deceive you—there are dan-
gers
From which no force, no numbers can protect us.

C

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE RICHARD.

These are the coinage of your timid fancy—
Phantoms of fear.

ADELAIDE.

Phantoms of fear ! O Richard,
Are all the sacred duties of our life,
The charities of love, the claims of virtue,
But merely phantoms ? Say, are all the precepts
With care imprinted on our infant bosoms,
Which mark alone, or which should mark alone,
The pride of birth, the dignity of station,
Are these delusions all—the mere inventions
Of human art, of prejudice and error ?
Is there no fear but what endangers life ?—
Is to preserve a miserable being,
Debas'd by servile infamy, degraded
By self-condemning conscience, all our care ?

PRINCE RICHARD.

What action of my life has given you cause
To deem my heart could entertain a thought
Of such unworthy meanness ?

ADELAIDE.

No—my soul
Acquits you of the charge.—I know your heart
Is truly noble, and when clear reflection
Dispels the mists that cloud your better reason,
Will still pursue the shining track of virtue.
Look to the fields of glory, where your arm
Has turn'd the scale of many a bloody day,
And ask if conquest came without a conflict.
Who gains a trophy from a foe unarm'd ?
Nor lie in camps alone the lists of honor.
O there are combats harder than the field's,
Where the insidious foe betrays within ;
And he whose coward virtue only triumphs
When not assail'd by trial and temptation,

Is

A TRAGEDY.

51

Is not true honor's servant.
While from the shadow of disgrace you fly,
You run to meet the substance.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Meet I not
The substance here—does not her horrid form
Glare in my starting eyes where'er I turn?—
Here is her dire abode, and to avoid
The baleful object, I must fly these walls.

ADELAIDE.

Let not the ensuriate demons of revenge
Impose upon your senses, and assume
The specious form of honor.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Just revenge
Is sanctified by honor, which without it
Becomes a lifeless mass.

ADELAIDE.

But who shall judge
When our revenge is just?—Not the swoll'n bosom
Inflam'd by recent injury.—Revenge
Alone is just when in impartial hands;
But there are situations which disarm
Even justice of her sword—No private wrong
Should cancel duties that we owe our country;
No insult arm a son against a father.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Such injuries as mine, nature revolts at,
And feels in such a strife her laws suspended—
My country will espouse my cause.

ADELAIDE.

For which,
In friendly gratitude, you'll rashly plunge her
In all the miseries of civil war.
But for a moment place the dreadful scene
Before your eyes.—Think only—

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE RICHARD.

I can think
 Of nothing but of thee, and the dread horrors
 To which I leave thee—That shall never be !
 The thought is madness—Let us fly together.

ADELAIDE.

No—if my prayers, my reasoning are too weak,
 To turn you from your purpose, lead you back
 To the deserted paths of fame and duty,
 I will be true to what I owe myself.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Heavens ! do I hear you right ?—Do you refuse
 To share my sinking fortune ?—Were your vows
 Of endless faith, unshaken constancy,
 Breath'd to the winds ?

ADELAIDE.

O do not wrong me thus—
 The powers of earth and heaven can witness for me,
 There's no extreme of wretchedness and want,
 I would not share with you—On the bare earth,
 Expos'd to all the warring elements,
 Sure of your love, and proud of conscious innocence,
 I were supremely blest—
 But ah ! to feel myself the vile associate
 Of infamy and vice—nay, more, the cause—
 It is a price too great to purchase all
 This world can give—to purchase even your love.

PRINCE RICHARD.

And add, my happiness, my life.—Alas !
 What do I say ? they are no longer dear
 To Adelaide—I am belov'd no more.

ADELAIDE.

Blov'd no more!—And do my weeping eyes,
 My agitated bosom, speak indifference ?
 But, ah ! what love can last that is not founded
 On virtue and esteem ?—Your own cool judgment,
 The raging storm of passion once subsided,
 Would

A TRAGEDY.

53

Would even despise me, curse the hated cause,
That, like a wandering meteor, led your steps
From honor's path,
And hate the partner of your infamy.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Hate thee!—By heaven, tho' now my laboring fancy
Forms such dire images as almost lead me
To doubts of horror, you engross my soul—
Thought cannot paint the ardor of my passion—
I love you even to torture.—Can it be—
Can such a perfect form inherit falsehood?

ADELAIDE.

That mean insinuation would offend me,
Did not my soul partake the bitter anguish
That wrings your bosom.

PRINCE RICHARD.

And you pity me.—
Ah! what, alas! is unavailing pity
To a distracted wretch you will not save!—
You talk of love and fondness, yet you see me
'Whelm'd in a deep abyss of misery,
And will not stretch a friendly arm to save me.

ADELAIDE.

Yes, I would save you—save your peace, your honor.

PRINCE RICHARD.

What! by the ruin of my fondest hopes,
The shipwreck of my love?—For, in my absence,
Henry perhaps—

ADELAIDE.

Am I so mean an object,
So sunk in men's opinions, that he dare
To offer violence to Philip's sister?

PRINCE

ADELAIDE:

PRINCE RICHARD.
By passion urg'd, and sure of present power,
The feeble image of a distant danger
Will vanish from his thought.—What shall defend
Your innocence from violence?—

ADELAIDE.

Myself—
My own determin'd will.

PRINCE RICHARD.

We easily
Despise a danger which we do not fear.
I see my folly now, that strove to wake
A sense of terror in a faithless woman
Of what she wishes, and who now despises
The wretched object of her former love,
When plac'd in competition with a crown.

ADELAIDE.

Eternal powers! have I deserv'd this usage—
This cruel imputation?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Your own heart
Must answer, yes—Even now your looks betray
The secret of your heart.—Perfidious maid
Tho' now to quit you rends my tortur'd heart
strings—
Degenerate weakness down, nor let a tear
Bedew my burning cheek—I tear myself
For ever from your presence—but, beware
My unexpected vengeance does not come
To interrupt your joys.

[Exe.

Enter EMMA.

EMMA.

I met the Prince
In cruel agitation.—Dearest Madam,
What dire event?—Alas! you seem disorder'd.

ADELAIDE.

A TRAGEDY.

55

ADELAIDE.

Emma, I am undone, for ever wretched,
Beyond imagination wretched!—doom'd
To misery and woe.—This dreadful struggle
Is too severe, I feel myself unequal
To bear the dreadful conflict.

EMMA.

Let me share
Your grief, and lighten, by the voice of friendship,
This weighty load of sorrow.

ADELAIDE.

While my tongue
Pleaded the cause of duty, that idea
Aroused my firmness—now 'tis past, and nought
Appears around me but a night of horror,
Scorn'd and deserted by the man I love—
O! Richard, must I never see thee more?
Is there no hope, no prospect?—Where's the Legate?—
Perhaps my tears, my sufferings, may induce him
To change the rigor of the Roman edict—
Where is he?—Say—

EMMA.

Alas! your hopes from him,
I fear, are groundless.—He is with the king,
Who, as Prince John inform'd me, now solicits
A dispensation from the rites that bound him
To Eleanor his consort, with intent
To marry you himself.

ADELAIDE.

O! monstrous effort
Of passion unrestrain'd!—Then all the hopes
With which I fondly propp'd my drooping mind
Are vanish'd to the winds—my dreams of happiness
In this vain world are over, and I fall

A sacrifice

A sacrifice to virtue.—Heaven, who knows
 The pureness of my heart, accept my vows !
 For to the sad protection of the altar
 I fly, from Henry's power—I fly !—alas !
 That such a flight must be—from love and Richard.
 For to my bosom, to my beating bosom,
 In spite of all his rash injurious doubts,
 His dear idea clings and makes this struggle
 Worse than the stroke of death !—I will not think !
 Richard ! I now devote me to the altar,
 Rather a victim of thy groundless jealousy
 Than fear of Henry !—Come, my gentle Emma,
 And hear me breathe the irrevocable vow !

[*Exeunt.*

Scene, Apartment in the Palace.

KING HENRY *alone.*

I have been ill advis'd—once more, I fear
 The fatal flames of discord will be kindled.
 I feel the hand of time, by trouble strengthen'd,
 Bear hard upon me—I have not the powers
 That firmer years, and brighter scenes, once gave
 me,
 To crush the pride of a rebellious son,
 And an unsteady people.

Enter PRINCE JOHN.

PRINCE JOHN.

Sir, I grieve
 To wound your ear with the unhappy tale—
 But my intemperate brother—

KING HENRY.

What new stroke
 Of fate awaits me ?—speak !

PRINCE JOHN.

To madness stung
 By the decision of the Legate, Richard
 Has left this city, and is fled towards Paris.

KING

A TRAGEDY:

57

KING HENRY.
Where were my troops !—What ! did they idle
stand,
And let the traitor pass ?

PRINCE JOHN.
I grieve to say
That you have been betray'd !—The Norman horse
Revolted with him ;—all the rest hung down
Their heads in sullen silence, nor would act
Against a hero who so oft had led them.

KING HENRY.
Base and degenerate cowards !—But my vengeance
Shall overtake your treachery.—Bid my band,
My faithful band of England's gallant knights,
Arm and to horse !—Myself will lead them on
To scourge these renegades.—It will not be—
Alas ! my fainting spirits sink beneath
The weight of grief and age ; my feeble arm
Shrinks from its purpose.—O ! my son, my son,
Lend me thy aid.

PRINCE JOHN.
Have courage, sir, revive,
Entrust to me your vengeance ; let me lead
Your warriors to the field.

KING HENRY.
It shall be so.—
Go to my faithful English, rouse their rage
Against these recreant traitors.

PRINCE JOHN.
Sir, perhaps
They may dispute my orders.

KING HENRY.
Take this signet,
They will obey that token.—Haste, my son,

H

Lead

Lead them to the pursuit, and bring in chains
These base deserters of their Prince and country.

[Exit PRINCE JOHN.]

KING HENRY, alone.

I feel the heavy load of fate press on me,
And bend me to the earth.—These starts of passion
O'erpower my waining strength—my failing years
Are to my will unequal.—Where are now
My friends, my children, who with lenient care
Should soothe the lapse of age!—O, Richard!
Richard!

Hast thou forgot the tears of penitence
That flow'd from Henry's eyes, what time he warn'd
thee,
With dying accents warn'd thee, to avoid
The crime of filial disobeience, which
His latest hours embitter'd.—John alone,
Of all the issue of proud Eleanor,
Retains his duty.—But here comes my Clifford,
The blooming offspring of a gentler race,
Sprung from my lov'd, my murder'd Rosamond!
Whose tried fidelity and gentle manners,
Endear him to my heart.

Enter CLIFFORD.

KING HENRY.

O! come, my Clifford,
And let me pour the sorrows of my soul
Into your gentle bosom!—You, perhaps,
You too will join with Richard, and forsake me.—
Ingratitude's the age's vice!

CLIFFORD.

O! fir,
Endear'd to me by every hallow'd tie—
My king, my master—Shall my voice presume
To

To add a nobler, and a dearer name ?—

My ever lov'd, my ever honor'd father,
If e'er this heart —

KING HENRY.

My Clifford, say no more,
I cannot doubt thy truth—The gentle candor,
The ingenuous softness of thy beauteous mother,
Beam in thine eyes.—Forgive my wayward fancy,
For, Clifford, I am press'd by many cares,
And need thy friendly counsel.

CLIFFORD.

Will your ear
Endure the honest voice of serious truth ?

KING HENRY.

O freely speak the dictates of thy heart,
I now can bear advice—can bear even censure—
The days of pride and insolence are gone,
Fled with my youth and my prosperity—
My lofty spirit vails it's towering pride
Beneath the iron hand of hard affliction.

CLIFFORD.

I will not cloath my free opinion, sir,
In terms of insolence, nor harshly urge
Memory of errors past—But, might my counsel
Be heard with favor, Richard should be sought
With gentle words and terms of reconciliation.

KING HENRY.

What !—bow myself to my rebellious son !—

CLIFFORD.

I do not wish to cloath my thoughts with aught
That sounds even like upbraiding—Yet, forgive me,
When I request you but to ask yourself
If he has not been injur'd.

KING HENRY.

O ! you probe
My bosom to the quick—I hardly dare
Even ask myself that question.—Yet, what's that
To his high crimes ?—Say I have been to blame—
Is that a cause for treason and rebellion ?—
I must, I will have vengeance.

CLIFFORD.

Ah ! how can you ?
The troops that fled with Richard, when united
With Philip's numerous host, and bearing with them
The fame in arms of their brave leader, leave you
No prospect of success. Remember, sir,
You are not now on England's sea-girt shore,
Fenc'd from all danger by the guardian Ocean,
O'er which she reigns supreme. Nought but a
weak,
And ill-defended frontier, here protects you
From the fierce inroad of a faithless people,
And an indignant monarch.

KING HENRY.

You're deceiv'd—
Long ere my rebel son can join with Philip,
He'll learn to fear my vengeance.—Warlike John,
Now leads my English horse in close pursuit :
He will o'ertake the treacherous fugitives,
And bring them back in triumph.

CLIFFORD.

Have you given
Prince John the power to lead the valiant troop
Of English knights that I commanded ?

KING HENRY.

Yes—
He has my signet to enforce obedience.

CLIFFORD.

A TRAGEDY.

61

CLIFFORD.

O! sir, recall that trust—

KING HENRY.

It is too late—

They are already on the march—You look
With sorrow and amazement.

CLIFFORD.

Royal sir,
If I have still been faithful—if this arm
Has ever done you true and loyal service,
If now you prize your honor and your safety,
Let me this instant follow him, and try
What mild and lenient measures will effect,
Ere it be yet too late. My troubled mind
Forebodes some fatal issue.

KING HENRY.

Why this quick
This strange alarm?—John is of cooler temper,
Not rash and hasty, like his fiery brother.

CLIFFORD.

Ask me not what I fear, or what I know—
I would not wish to plant another thorn
Within a breast already too much wounded—
But trust me once, and let me fly, if possible,
To close this dreadful breach.

KING HENRY.

What can you do?
What terms propose, that shall not shake at once
My honor and my power?—

CLIFFORD.

By all that's sacred
On earth and heaven, let me conjure you, quit
Your ill-plac'd jealousy—Persuade the Legate
To let the holy rites proceed, and give
Fair Adelaide to Richard's eager wishes.

KING

KING HENRY.

You are not yet aware of half the dangers
That wait those nuptials—My revolted son
With Philip leagued—

CLIFFORD.

O! sir, you have a foe
Nearer than Philip, who with serpent tooth
Preys on the parent breast that fosters him.
Detain me not a moment—On my knees
Let me entreat your confidence—trust me now,
And let me save you, tho' I perish.

KING HENRY.

There is a mystery in all you say—
Explain yourself more clearly.

CLIFFORD.

All, in time
Will fully be explain'd—the present moment
Admits not of delay.

KING HENRY.

Then go, my Clifford—
To your discretion and fidelity
I trust the event.

CLIFFORD.

And may I prosper only
As I am true to you. My lord, farewell;
And may I meet you soon with happier prospects.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT V.

*Scene the Abbey.***ADELAIDE,** *in a religious habit.***ADELAIDE.**

MY vows are seal'd to heaven—eternal oaths,
Breath'd with religious zeal, have shut me
now

For ever from the world, and 'tis in vain
To throw one look behind me—Yet, my **Richard**,
My lingering heart still breathes a sigh for thee—
It must not be—I will subdue the force
Of it's rebellious feelings, and devote
My thoughts alone to heaven.

Enter EMMA.

Come, my **Emma**,
Thy presence shall assist my weak resolves.
The bosom still will cling to some lov'd object,
And friendship may, without offence, survive
The cloister's silent tomb.

EMMA.

I hope to gild
Your grief with brighter prospects—You may yet
Be free, be happy.

ADELAIDE.

Never—I am now
Securely shelter'd from the gusts of fortune
In this still harbor.—Shall I venture forth
To try again the various storms that wait
To wreck the votaries of a troubled world?—
Besides—my solemn vows are now recorded
In the irrevocable doom of heaven;
Nor can I, if I would, evade their force—

Or

Or could they be revok'd, the injurious wrongs
Of Richard's doubts and Henry's lawless passion—

EMMA.

You have been much deceiv'd—both been deceiv'd—

The wiles of John—

ADELAIDE.

Ah! my prophetic fears
Were then too just.—My heart ever mistrusted
His dark reserve—Proceed my friend.

EMMA.

His arts, beneath the mask of friendly care, instill'd
Beneath the mask of friendly care, instill'd
A mutual jealousy between the King,
And his too hasty son—This, Clifford now
Has to my ears imparted—He is gone,
By Henry's special order, to bring back
Misguided Richard.

ADELAIDE.

That is now too late!—
Why did my rash precipitation drive me
To breathe the fatal vow which has cut off
My hope of joy for ever—Yet, why mourn
The only step that could ensure my peace?—
O I were weak indeed again to trust
My future happiness to the wild passions
Of one, who thus, by causeless doubt alarm'd,
Threw me with scorn, an outcast from his bosom.

Enter KING HENRY.

KING HENRY.

Start not, my Adelaide, nor think I come
A bold intruder here; for in my heart,
My wounded heart, I feel, alas! too strongly
A sense of former injuries to thee
And my revolted son.—You turn away
Your eyes indignant.

ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

Sir, the stormy passions
Of scorn, and of resentment, ill become
A mind devoted to the meek profession
Of peace and resignation.

KING HENRY.

That reflection
Redoubles all my sorrows.—'Twas the frenzy
Of my rash jealousy, that drove your innocence
To this retreat; but you may yet be happy,
My son may still be your's, and those mild eyes
Beam peace and safety on discordant nations,
And heal the wounds this fatal day has given
To my distracted house.

ADELAIDE.

It cannot be.
Were I, tho' that's impossible, set free
From these my sacred vows, your son, alas!
Could never be my choice.—The injurious treat-
ment—

KING HENRY.

My Adelaide, you are too good, too just,
To let my errors fall on hapless Richard.
They rous'd his jealousy.

ADELAIDE.

That is past,
Irrevocably past—it matters little
From whom my misery arose—my vows
Are now beyond recall.

KING HENRY.

Think not so,
They may be cancell'd—Rome has ample power,
As well as will, to serve me.—Where's the Legate?
I did expect him here.

ATTENDANT.

The Legate now
Is in the abbey, sir, and waits your pleasure.

I

KING

ADELAIDE:

KING HENRY.

O bid him quickly enter.—Lovely Adelaide
 Retire awhile.—I hope this interview
 Will seal your peace.

ADELAIDE.

I shall await the event.—Tho' of the hope
 For other peace, than solitude and prayer
 Can give within these walls, I feel no presage.

[*Exeunt ADELAIDE and EMMA.*

Enter the LEGATE.

LEGATE.

My lord, I come to rouse your tardy zeal.—
 Where are the troops, the warlike preparations,
 That Richard is to head against the infidels?—
 All Europe now is warm in expectation,
 England alone excepted.

KING HENRY.

Holy father,
 I fear our hopes are blighted in the bud.
 The youthful warrior who should lead my troops
 To Philip is revolted, and with him,
 Threatens our safety.—I have now no force
 For distant war, happy if I can guard
 My own dominions from their arms.

LEGATE.

Fear not,
 I will protect them. For if royal Philip
 Presume to join in Richard's rash rebellion,
 Or form designs against a realm, whose arms
 Are now devoted to our common cause,
 I will denounce the church's vengeance on him.
 And, should he pertinaciously persist,
 Turn the collected force that's now assembled,
 On him and his adherents.

KING HENRY.

Yet, perhaps,

There

There is a milder way to calm this tempest,
And give the nation peace.

LEGATE.

Name it, my lord.
O Heaven forefend, we e'er should have recourse
To violence, when gentler means are offer'd,
Or speak in terror, when the seraph voice
Of mercy may be heard.

KING HENRY.

Then thus, my lord.
Absolve the royal virgin from her vows,
Breath'd in rash haste, and for a time dispense
With Richard's service, 'till his promis'd nuptials
With Adelaide are over.

LEGATE.

Think not of it—
It cannot be.

KING HENRY.

Yet hear me. Suffer not
Intemperate zeal, with over weening haste
To hurt the sacred cause it would support.
You now can have but a divided force.
Consent but to these nuptials, and defer
For a short space the war—that time elaps'd,
England and France united, 'neath the banners
Of my victorious son, shall to it's basis
Shake the proud throne of Saladin.

LEGATE.

Your purpose
Is strangely alter'd since we last convers'd.
But tho' these fickle wav'nings of the mind,
May suit, perhaps, with temporal concerns,
The will of heaven is permanent, and bends not
To the weak changes of capricious man.

KING HENRY.

You will not then accede to my proposal?—

LEGATE.

He is still LEGATE.

Never—it cannot be—nay, urge me not.

KING HENRY.

Curse on my crooked policy, that first
Invok'd your aid, and made myself your slave.
O Adelaide! O Richard! O my children!
My cruel perseverance has undone you,
For I have arm'd a ruthless power against you,
And try in vain to shield you from it's fury.
But know, insulting priest! I will not suffer
Myself, my injur'd children, and my people,
To reap the bitter fruits my hand has sown.
I will appeal to England's laws, which oft
Have check'd the encroachments of your haughty
pontiff;
They shall annihilate these impious vows,
And join the hands of Adelaide and Richard.

LEGATE.

I smile with scorn at such unmeaning threats.
You and your frantic islanders will dare
To break these vows?—Attempt it, and that mo-
ment
I publish Rome's anathema against you,
And your rebellious people. Farther—should you
With sacrilegious insolence presume
To solemnize these nuptials, and unite
Your son with a recluse—your bleeding realms,
While a foul brand lies on their spurious race
For ages, shall lament the dire effects
Of a contested, and unfix'd succession.
And now, my lord, farewell, to your own counsels,
And your obedient sons, I leave the event. [Exit.]

KING HENRY.

This is, alas! the fatal consequence
Of my appeal to Rome. The dreadful weapon
Is turn'd against myself—Thus is it ever
With those who would accomplish rash designs

By

A TRAGEDY.

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By evil means—O never let the mind
Of manly firmness seek to gain it's purpose
By means that honor turns from—nor a monarch
Basely submit his own, his people's rights,
To the decisions of a foreign power.

Enter CLIFFORD.

Clifford!—Return'd alone?—Have you succeeded?
Do you bring peace?—Your brow, alas! portends
Some dreadful tidings—speak—Where are my
sons?

Say, did you come in time to check the fury
Of John's attack?

CLIFFORD.

There was no cause—the princes
Met without violence.

KING HENRY.

'Twas as I thought—
Did I not augur right?—Did I not say
The prudence of my younger son would justify
The charge I trusted to him—O! I knew
He would not rashly give the rein to vengeance:—
You seem to heed me not!—What means this si-
lence!

Where are my sons?—Do they approach?

CLIFFORD.

They do.

KING HENRY.

Quick let me meet them, fly to their embrace;
And in the strength of my united house,
Laugh at the haughty menace of the Legate.

CLIFFORD.

O! stay my royal lord—for if you go,
You go to ruin and captivity.

KING HENRY.

Your words amaze me! Solve these contradictions.

Did

ADELAIDE :

Did you not say my sons were reconcil'd ?
That John—

CLIFFORD.

Is a perfidious traitor !

KING HENRY.

Rash young man,
Do not provoke my rage. I know his faith,
Approv'd, unshaken ; nor will hear a doubt,
That envious hate, or jealousy may breathe
Against his firm attachment to his father.

CLIFFORD.

Envious of him ? Jealous of his attachment
To you, my lord ?—I were, indeed, the worst,
The most abandon'd traitor, if I could
But even in thought, betray the trust you gave,
As he has done.

KING HENRY.

Away ! no more of this

CLIFFORD.

O ! sir, if my destruction were alone
The fatal consequence of your persisting
Still in this pleasing error, I would never
Offend you with the truth, but calmly yield
To that worst ill, your undeserv'd displeasure ;
Lie under the suspicion of employing
The envious arts of secret defamation,
To injure him you love. But, sir, your safety,
Your liberty demand that I should speak
The atrocious deed. Fly from these walls this in-
stant ;
You have not here a moment's safety ! Know
The princes, with united powers approach,
First to depose, and then imprison you.

KING HENRY.

Ha !—both the princes said you ?—

CLIFFORD.

A TRAGEDY.

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CLIFFORD.

Yes, sir, both.—

As with arm'd heels I urg'd my fiery courser
In the pursuit of John, I met his force
Returning with the rebel troops of Richard,
In friendly folds their mingled banners waving,
But hostile each to you.—I then deliver'd
The terms of general peace and pardon to them ;
Terms, which imperious Richard only answer'd
By scorn and indignation, which were blown
To tenfold violence by the suggestions,
And dark insidious hints.

KING HENRY.

O, my swoll'n heart !—

Speak not his hated name, lest like the dagger
Of foul unnatural parricide, it pierce
My bleeding bosom.—Have I thus, beneath
The semblance of the purest filial love,
Foster'd ingratitude !—My fondest hope,
The only stay of my declining years,
Is vanish'd into air.—I feel it here—
With deadly force it rends my breaking heart.—
I sink beneath the blow !

[Falls into the arms of his Attendants.

CLIFFORD.

Sir, look up—

Be comforted ;—resume your resolution !

KING HENRY.

Never !—this fatal stroke has kill'd my hopes.—
I have no joy, no consolation, left me.—
My Clifford, I have wrong'd thy faithful service
By causeless doubt !

CLIFFORD.

Waste not a thought on me.—

[Trumpet at a distance.
Heard

Heard you that warlike sound?—Sir, they approach—

O! for your own, and for your people's sake,
Consult your safety.—Urge with speed your flight—
The danger presses.—I will face the storm
With the few faithful troops I can assemble,
While you escape.—Ruin surrounds you here—
But could you reach the shores of England—

KING HENRY.

No! Death is my choice, and I can perish here.
I feel the languor of declining life
O'erwhelm my fainting frame.—My woes, alas!
Will be of short duration.—Happy island!
Seat of my former glory, ne'er again
Shall thy white cliffs rise to my longing eyes
In pleasing prospect—never more these lungs
Inhale the balmy fragrance of thy air.—
France must receive my ashes—yet, my Clifford,
Let not my destiny involve thee—fly!
Preserve thyself, and leave me to my fate.

CLIFFORD.

Now you indeed are cruel—your suspicions
Do hurt me now.—Leave you? and can you deem
So basely of me?—No, sir, I will stay
And sacrifice my latest breath to serve you.

KING HENRY.

O! my dear son, thy filial virtue comes
Like the faint radiance of the setting ray
That gilds the evening storm, to cheer the close
Of my tempestuous days. They soothe my anguish,
And almost teach me not to hate mankind—
My only thought towards life is, how to recompense
Such exemplary goodness;—but I feel

It

It cannot be—I die!—and leave my power
 To those who have destroy'd me—in whose eyes
 Fidelity to me will be a crime.—
 Oh! I am sick to death;—lead—lead me in.

[Exit, led by CLIFFORD.]

Scene before the Abbey.

Enter PRINCE RICHARD, and PRINCE JOHN, with English and Norman Soldiers.

PRINCE RICHARD.

My brave companions, prosperous fortune smiles
 Upon our waving ensigns; all who meet us,
 Meet us as friends, and swell our growing ranks
 With their encreasing numbers!—But these walls,
 These fatal walls, strike terror thro' my soul!—
 My breast is chill'd with fear—perhaps my Ade-
 laide
 Is now devoted to my father's arms!—
 Summon the inmates of this dreary mansion!

ABBESS, *at the grate.*

What voice profane, so loudly dares disturb
 The peaceful sabbath of this holy dome?

PRINCE RICHARD.

Richard of England; who comes here the cham-
 pio
 Of innocence, and beauty.—When the walls
 Devoted to religion yield a refuge
 To persecuted virtue, they are sacred
 From worldly interruption; every spear
 Should bow it's steely point in holy reverence—
 But when they once become the guilty seat
 Of violence and outrage, every claim
 Of sanctity is lost; each gloomy cloister
 Is by the hand severe of equal justice,
 Mark'd for destruction.—Therefore, on the instant

K

Bring

ADELAIDE:

Bring forth my Adelaide, or by my honor,
 A soldier's injur'd honor, I will raze
 This fabric to the earth.

Enter ADELAIDE from the Abbey.

ADELAIDE.

Forber, rash man,
 Your guilty violence—nor after breaking
 The sacred laws of duty, and of honor,
 Revolting from your king, your fire, your country,
 Wage impious war with heaven.

PRINCE RICHARD.

My Adelaide,
 Are your vows pass'd—Then I am truly wretched.

ADELAIDE.

'Tis so indeed, my lord. But yet remember
 Whose groundless jealousy, whose words injurious,
 Whose harsh reproofs, disclaiming even the shadow
 Of tenderness and love, have driven me hither.
 I had no other proof, alas ! to give,
 That my rejected heart was true to you,
 Tho' it refus'd to share your crimes—That virtue,
 And not a pageant sceptre, was the idol
 That I preferr'd even to your love.

PRINCE RICHARD.

O cruel
 And fatal proof, that has for ever doom'd me
 To misery and woe !—To see you torn
 For ever from me thus—to find you innocent,
 Yet know you never can be mine.—Distraction !

ADELAIDE.

[*Going.*]

Farewell.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Ah ! do not leave me, Adelaide—
 Give me one tender word, one parting look.

ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

Yes—I will speak once more—nay, will confess,
 That spite of all the holy vows I breath'd,
 Nor time, nor prayer, nor penitence, I fea ,
 Will ever blot you from my wounded bosom,
 Till in the dark oblivion of the grave
 Your image and my life are sunk together.
 I feel I've said too much—My lord, farewell !
 Where e'er you go, may prosperous fortune wait you,
 And angels shield you in the hour of danger
 With love as zealous, and as pure as mine :
 And when some fairer and some happier virgin
 (You cannot meet a truer) shall receive
 With more auspicious stars your nuptial vows,
 If e'er the fervid temper of your mind
 Lead you to doubt her faith, O let one thought
 Of your unhappy Adelaide come o'er
 Your ruffled soul, and tell you, innocence
 May be unjustly slandered.—Take my sad,
 My last adieu—for we must meet no more. [Exit.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Stay, stay, my only hope !—Leave me not thus
 A prey to deep remorse and woe—She is gone—
 For ever gone—and am I left alone,
 Amid a world that gives no joy without her.—
 Curse on my blind credulity, that mov'd me
 To wound her tried fidelity.

PRINCE JOHN.

Why blame
 With such asperity the glaring proofs
 On which your scorn was founded ? Be not ever
 Dup'd by the false pretence of female artifice.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Enough of this—I have, alas ! too much
 Listened to your suggestions.—That dark mind,

Is much too prone, I fear, to judge of others
 By what it reads within—Your dangerous counsels
 Have ruin'd me.—The only consolation
 That now remains is vengeance—Yes, those walls
 Shall feel my fury—and, unnatural father,

[*Pointing to the town.*
 You shall partake my ruin—Calls of duty,
 And impulse of affection, I disdain you—
 Ye shall not check my rage—Affist me soldiers.

Enter CLIFFORD from the Abbey.

CLIFFORD.

Stay thy ungovern'd violence, rash man,
 Nor further tempt thy fate.

PRINCE RICHARD.

Clifford!—Away!
 Stop not the torrent of my just revenge,
 Lest it o'erwhelm thee.

CLIFFORD.

And is Clifford then
 So little known to Richard, that he thinks
 His threatenings will appal him? Are the towers
 Of Mans forgot, where this true breast, undaunted,
 Oppos'd itself a bulwark to your numbers,
 In our dear father's cause, while your fell sword
 Hunted his sacred life, Alas! this hour
 Demands not manly courage—'tis not now
 That spears and swords must triumph—Here's a fight
 To freeze your impious ardor, rivet down
 With gorgon look your stiffen'd limbs to earth.

[*King Henry's body brought in.*
 Unnatural offspring of a murder'd king,
 Slain by your harsh unkindness!—Parricides!
 Look on that corse, and if the seeds of nature
 Yet live within your breasts—weep tears of blood.

PRINCE

A TRAGEDY.

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PRINCE RICHARD.

[*Dropping his sword.*

O fight of woe—My father! O my father!

PRINCE JOHN.

Ah, lamentable day!—

CLIFFORD.

And dost thou weep,
Perfidious hypocrite, whose cruel treachery
First broke his noble heart—That was the shaft
That brought him to the dust. With manly firmness
He bore his son's revolt, his faithless troops;
Yes, blush ye shame to English loyalty;

[*To the English soldiers.*

The Legate's insolence, who refus'd to break
The vows of Adelaide; for know, and mourn
Thy haste—misguided prince, he was employing
Each means to heal thy sufferings, while the breath
Of that malignant traitor, which first rais'd
Your mutual jealousy, was then corrupting
Thy faith by new suspicions.

PRINCE JOHN.

'Tis as false
As hell and thee.—

CLIFFORD.

Did not yon awful ruin
Of murder'd majesty, o'ercharge with sorrow
My better spirits, this vindictive arm
Should force thy recreant accents to confess
The truth of what I say—that now is past—
This hand shall never grasp a sword again.
For when I have perform'd the solemn rites
To martyr'd Henry's shade, I vow to give
The remnant of my life to holy duties.
Whene'er you call upon me, I will prove
To you, and all mankind, this dreadful charge,
Not by the doubtful arm of violence,
But by true facts, and clear unbiass'd witness.

PRINCE

PRINCE RICHARD.

If he does prove this charge—and much I fear
It will be so—I shall for ever hold thee
An alien to my blōod—unfit to taint
The light of day, and social haunts of man—
Till then we hold thee prisoner—Injur'd corse,
I tremble to approach thee, lest thy blood
Bursting it's swelling channels, rush upon me,
And mark me as thy murderer.—Clifford, see
The obsequies with reverend care perform'd ;—
For I will fly these climes, and you, my friends,
Companions of my guilt—but by that guilt,
Alas ! seduc'd—together let us go,
And, on the stern oppressors of our faith,
Expiate our crimes.—And thou, much injur'd saint,
In these lone walls secluded, in thy orisons,
When thou pour'st forth thy fervent soul in pray'r,
O breathe one sigh for a repentant wretch,
Whom the wild frenzy of ungovern'd passion
Has torn from thee, and happiness, for ever.

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.